

TAN DA (1888-1939). Pen-name of Nguyen Khac Kieu, a popular Vietnamese poet during the early twentieth century. Born in Son Tay province, Tan Da received a classical education and unsuccessfully took the regional civil service examination in 1912. Becoming a journalist, he worked for Nguyen Van Vinh's Dong Duong Tap Chi (Indochinese Review) and then established his own journal, An-Nam.

During his active life Tan Da became famous as a poet, writing in the modern idiom of quoc ngu but evoking traditional Confucian themes that still appeal to conservative elements within the population. He also wrote moral primers designed to preserve traditional virtues in a rapidly changing society. Yet Tan Da also states publicly that the Vietnamese needed the French to assist

them in adjusting to the challenges of the modern world.

After his journal ceased publication in 1933, Tan Da retired to his native village. He died in 1939. (See Literature)